

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 HA-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00
PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01
SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11 /094 W
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R 110631Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0953
USMISSION USUN NY 2590
INFO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY GABORONE
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY LILONGWE
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE PRETORIA 2021

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PDEV PINT RH
SUBJ: RHODESIA: SUSPENSION OF POLITICAL EXECUTIONS

1. THE PRETORIA NEWS REPORTED APRIL 8 THAT RHODESIA'S FOUR-MAN RULING EXECUTIVE COUNCIL HAS PRIVATELY MADE A DECISION THAT THERE WILL BE NO FURTHER EXECUTIONS OF PEOPLE WHO HAVE BEEN SENTENCED TO DEATH FOR "POLITICAL" OR "TERRORIST" OFFENSES.

2. THERE HAVE REPORTEDLY BEEN NO EXECUTIONS SINCE THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL WAS FORMED ON MARCH 21. IT IS NOT KNOWN AT THIS TIME WHETHER A FORMAL ANNOUNCEMENT WILL BE MADE THAT EXECUTIONS HAVE CEASED.

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3. THE ARTICLE SAYS THE DECISION TO END EXECUTIONS IS BASED UPON THE STATUS OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL IN RELATION TO A PERSON CONDEMNED TO DEATH. UNDER THE EXISTING AGREEMENT, ALL CONDEMNED PERSONS HAVE THE RIGHT TO APPEAL FOR CLEMENCY TO THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL.

4. ACCORDING TO THE ARTICLE, BOTH MUZOREWA AND SITHOLE HAVE MADE IT CLEAR THEY WOULD UPHOLD ANY APPEAL FOR CLEMENCY SUBMITTED TO THE COUNCIL.

5. THE ARTICLE GOES ON TO SPECULATE THAT THIS DECISION TO END HANGINGS TOGETHER WITH TENTATIVE PLANS TO RELEASE POLITICAL DETAINEES IS AN ATTEMPT TO BOOST LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT FOR THE INTERNAL SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT.

6. COMMENT: SINCE THE EARLY STATES OF THE INTERNAL TALKS, BOTH MUZOREWA AND SITHOLE HAVE EMPHASIZED THEIR SUPPORT OF DETAINEE RELEASE. ALTHOUGH THE CAPITAL PUNISHMENT OF PERSONS BEING HELD FOR POLITICAL OFFENSES IS NOT KNOWN TO HAVE FORMALLY BEEN DISCUSSED IN THE TALKS, IT HAS BEEN AN EMOTIONAL ISSUE FOR MANY BLACK RHODESIANS. THIS REPORT, IF TRUE, COULD HELP BOOST CREDIBILITY FOR MUZOREWA AND SITHOLE AMONG BLACKS WHO ARE AS YET UNDECIDED ON THE VALIDITY OF THE INTERNAL SETTLEMENT AND ARE HINGING THEIR FINAL JUDGMENT ON THE PERFORMANCE OF THE BLACK LEADERS IN THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
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Concepts: EXECUTIONS, POLITICAL PRISONERS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 11 apr 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780156-0075
Format: TEL
From: PRETORIA
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